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THE GULL
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AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

VOLUME 3 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, OCTOBER, 1921 NUMBER 10

OCTOBER MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 13th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Assembly Hall of the Public Library, corner McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Mr. Tracy I. Storer, Honorary Member of the Association, and Field Naturalist of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, will describe "Some Sierran Experiences" during the season just closing. Visitors will be welcomed.

It is hoped that a large quota of our members will make a point of attending this meeting, not only for their own enjoyment and profit, but as well to register their wishes in the matter of a regular place of meeting.

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OCTOBER FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, October 16th, to and around Lake Merced. East Bay members should take ferry boat reaching San Francisco about 8:40 a.m. and go thence by Mission Street car, line No. 12, with "Ocean" sign. Leave car at Fortieth Ave. and Sloat Boulevard. San Francisco members take Ingleside car, line No. 17, and transfer to car line No. 12 at Nineteenth Ave. and Sloat Boulevard and ride west on the boulevard to Fortieth Ave.

Party will form at 9:30 a.m., at entrance to nurseries of MacRorie & McLaren on Sloat Boulevard, near the point where Fortieth Ave. intersects same. Bring lunch and drinking water. Leader, Mr. C. R. Thomas.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING: The fifty-sixth regular meeting of the Association was held on September 8th, in the Oak Room of the Palace Hotel, with President Kibbe in the chair; Miss Ames, Recording Secretary; thirty-one members and guests in attendance.

Following a very brief reference to business matters, Dr. Joseph Grinnell, Honorary Member of the Association, held the attention of all present throughout a most interesting account of his trip to and about various Eastern points during April and May, last. It is much to be regretted that we are able merely to refer to a few of Dr. Grinnell's observations and experiences.

Commenting upon bird observation en route, it was noted that the most favorable location was in the forward part of train, where birds might be noted as they were first startled by the locomotive, and that thirty or thirty-five miles per hour was the most advantageous speed of train or other vehicle, inasmuch as this is somewhat above the average velocity of bird flight. During eighty minutes' travel, on April 18th, between Salina and Junction City, Kansas, 218 individuals were noted, and 12 different species, of which 163 were blackbirds. In general, 70% of the birds seen

from trains are black, although only 10% of all our birds are black. On two occasions, 25 and 17 male lark buntings were noted to one female, although the presumption would be that the males and females were about equal in number. This extreme example of the higher visibility of black over grayish brown, is probably due to the very striking white patches on the wings of the males.

Eighty-seven doves were observed within fifteen minutes in southern Oregon. Most of us have noted the abundance of doves and meadowlarks seen from trains and this is explained by the fact that these birds are especially prone to frequent the rights of way of railroads, for feeding grounds.

Through all the various other sounds, the notes of house wrens and meadowlarks reached the ear, even though the train windows were closed.

The European starling is steadily increasing in numbers in the East and is quite conspicuous in the parks of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. The Chinese starling, (mynah), is apparently established in considerable numbers in Vancouver, B. C.

English tree sparrows were seemingly established in Shaw's garden, in St. Louis at one time and survived up to a few years ago, but a visit there failed to disclose any at the present time.

Dr. Grinnell recounted interesting experiences and meetings with prominent ornithologists in Kansas City, St. Louis, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia and Washington. In the latter city, he accompanied Dr. T. S. Palmer, the noted bibliographer, to the Congressional Cemetery to locate the grave of John K. Townsend, whose name is familiar to us all in connection with the bunting, solitaire and warbler which were named in his honor.

In Ithaca, N. Y., Prof. Arthur A. Allen was found on May 22d, watching over four broods of ruffed grouse which he had succeeded in having hatched under bantam hens. Here, alas, must be recorded a blot upon the escutcheon of the cherished house wren, for they had developed a bent for destroying the eggs of other birds. The specific example, however, is not altogether discreditable, for they were observed to have cleaned out five eggs of the English sparrow from their nests. Here, too, was found a bat roost, many occupants of which had been banded by Prof. Allen.

At the conclusion of Dr. Grinnell's recount, the meeting adjourned with expressions of high appreciation of a most enjoyable and illuminating address.

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CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME

Hawks.

Every field-faring member of the Association should take pains to secure a copy of the July number of this interesting publication. Pages 133-147 contain an article by Dr. H. C. Bryant on "California Hawks: How to Identify Them", followed by a hawk bibliography.

Non-technical general and specific descriptions are followed by field keys in which classifications are based, first, upon mode of flight and second, upon size. Four figures give the characteristic outlines of the red-tail, marsh hawk, sharp-shinned and sparrow hawks, which will be recalled by those who attended the March meeting of the Association. The hawks, with their juvenal and sexual variations and color phases, constitute the *betes noire* of the amateur, and challenge the skill of the expert non-collecting observers. The keys above mentioned will afford practically all the book

assistance possible for field identification. Copies may be obtained by addressing Dr. Bryant at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, Calif.

Conservation and the Scientific Collector.

On page 160 will be found an editorial which probably makes out as good a case as possible for the scientific collector, in general. Comparison is made of the execution by the one hundred and fifty scientific collectors in this State with that by the one hundred, eighty *thousand* licensed sporting hunters. Obviously the pressure brought to bear upon government and State officials to further restrict the scientific collector cannot be based upon conservation of protected birds in general. The scientific collectors of the State exert an infinitesimal influence upon the *total* number of otherwise protected birds. The domestic cat and the small boy take an enormously greater toll of our cherished species. The writer believes that the explanation of sentimental opposition to the scientific collector and the efforts which have been, and are being, made to restrict his activities, lies in what must be characterized as his apparent indifference to the results of his ruthless slaughter of species rare or previously unrecorded in the area of his operations. If a species be rare enough, or apparently dwindling rapidly, the technical mind reverts to the propriety of killing off all known members, lest the last specimens should fall into unappreciative hands. If a species be found breeding far from its recorded habitat, the scientific collector must needs gather in the female, the nest and the eggs, and if possible the male, in order to demonstrate the occurrence. Credence will be accorded to an ornithologist when he states that he secured certain specimens in certain locations, but he must not expect any other ornithologist to accept his identification unless he can produce the said specimens.

This all makes for accuracy of record, but the writer believes that it also exercises a very material and regrettable influence upon natural development and the re-establishment of dwindling species.

The editorial to which reference is made concludes with the suggestion that a collector who demonstrates his interest in scientific study and his ability to contribute to science should be encouraged rather than discouraged. The writer would add one more qualification for permissible collecting, to wit, that the collector's contributions to science should not cost more than they are worth.

A. S. Kibbe.

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GAME LAWS FOR 1921

Farmers' Bulletin 1235, United States Department of Agriculture. Contribution from the Bureau of Biological Survey. A Summary of Federal, State and Provincial Statutes.

This is another compendium of information of interest to every bird lover and conservationist. Following a review of legislation of 1921, it gives a summary of game laws in force in every State, every Canadian Province and in Newfoundland; the Lacey Act, regulating inter-State commerce in game; Federal and Canadian Acts prohibiting importation of plumage; Federal law protecting birds and their eggs on Federal bird reservations; Treaty between the United States and Great Britain for the protection of migratory birds in the United States and Canada; Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Regulations in force thereunder; Canadian regulations under Migratory-Birds Convention Act; and a list of officials from whom a copy of Game Laws may be obtained.

Every member of the Association should have a copy of, and be familiar with the contents of this pamphlet. Copies will be sent to anyone filing request with Miss Ames or Mr. Kibbe on or before October 20th.

SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP was taken on Sunday, the 18th, to Lincoln Park, Alameda, Bay Farm Island and Alameda Mole. As the tide did not serve until nearly 2:00 p. m., lunch was attacked promptly after arrival on the flats off the park. The list of shore birds was small but interesting and when the day's offering seemed to be complete, the party strolled to Bay Farm Bridge. The barriers were forced and the bridge crossed and the walk extended for a considerable distance along the northerly shore road, which, however, is rather too far from the water's edge for satisfactory observation, and birders should visit here resigned to a trip over the muddy flats. Retracing our steps, the train was taken at High St. for Alameda Pier. Here four Berkeley members raided the lunch baskets of the San Francisco contingent and started back along the shore and tracks in the gathering gloom. The gloom gathered so successfully that the three-mile walk to Webster St. assumed the character of a stumbling contest in which the first prize was divided among all entrants, but three birds were added to the list, thereby.

Birds encountered were: Western, California and Heerman gulls; Forster tern, great blue heron and clapper rail (?); Northern phalarope, knot (?), sandpipers and marbled godwits; Western willets, curlews, black-bellied plover, killdeer, semi-palmated plover and snowy plover; red wing, meadowlark, Bryant marsh and song sparrows. Twenty species.

As guests, came Mrs. Baily, Miss Harris and Miss Pringle. Members present were Misses Ames, Ayer, Baily, Griffin and Raphael; Mesdames Kibbe, E. D. Roe and Warrington; Messrs. Kibbe, Rapp and Thomas. Eleven members and three guests.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

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